



THE MOSLEM
AND
THE HINDOO.

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MOSLEM AND THE HINDOO.



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A Poem

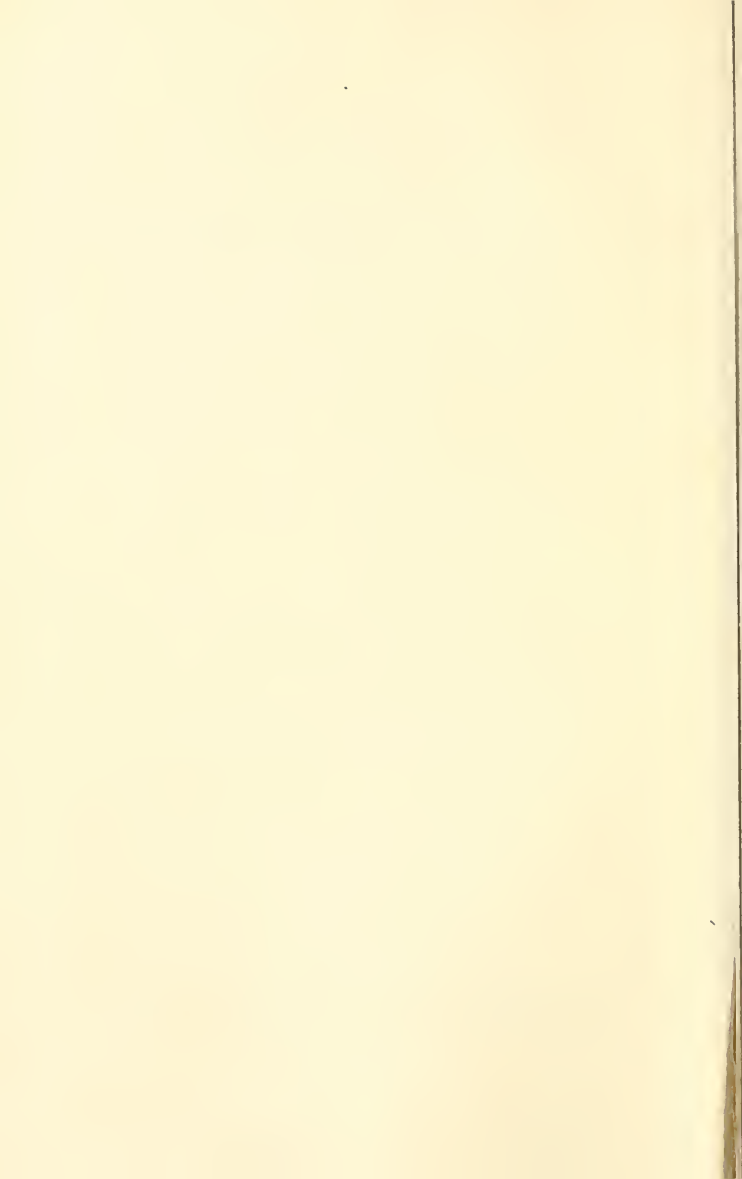
ON THE SEPOY REVOLT.

BY

A GRADUATE OF OXFORD.

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Aug 7

THE MOSLEM AND THE HINDOO.

Sleep! 'tis a most delicious boon of heav'n!
The wretched and exhausted find repose
And sweet forgetfulness in gentle sleep.
It has a realm its own—both joy and woe
Reign in their varied and acutest forms,
As dreams come stealing on with noiseless step
Seizing the mind oblivious of the world,
And sporting 'mong' mysterious fantasies.
It is a wondrous power pervading earth,
Diffusing round a subtile drowsiness,
Oft sought, and sought in vain—but falls anon

Unask'd ; and so on Agatha it fell,
And sooth'd with welcome touch her wasted frame.

She slept upon her couch ; beside her sat
Her daughter Amy, watching anxiously
The silent features of her mother's face.
Though saddest thoughts ran through her mind,
 she knew

A deadlier weight was on her mother's heart,
Sinking it into lowest depths of woe,
And in that sorrow she forgot her own.

The day was fine and sultry, and the calm
Lay heavily upon her ; not a breeze
Rustled the leaves above the summer walk ;
Nor, stealing through the window, dar'd to kiss
With cool, refreshing lips the sleeper's cheek,
Wanting the bloom of health ; the scented flow'rs
Breath'd a rich fragrance, tempting the lull'd winds
To rise and drink their sweetness, but they came not.

There was no sound : the merry bird had ceas'd
His cheerful note, and in the shady grove
Sat lazily, or hopp'd from bough to bough.
Far through the meadows flow'd the silver stream,
Now glist'ning in the sun—now gloomily
Frown'd in grim darkness underneath the shade.

The mother slept, and it may be forgot
The sorrow which had rent her heart, and dream'd
Of days long gone—the sunny, sunny days,
Which seem more joyous when in after time
We catch the glimpse of their retreating form
Departing in the dismal vale of years.
Calm in her slumber, on her face there sat
The fair expression of eternal peace—
Death rob'd in beauty, animated death
Tinted and fresh with hectic flush of life,
His pallid garments thrown aside awhile
To make his ghastly form less terrible.

Not all unbroken calm—anon there stole
A frown across the features ; like a cloud
It pass'd, but soon return'd with darker shade.
A troubled dream disturb'd her slumb'ring soul—
It struggled with its woe convulsively,
Then with a start awoke. “ Ah me ! ” she cried,
“ What did I see—what hear—reality ?
Alas ! that shriek, it rent my heart in twain.
Where am I ? Do I dream ? Amy, my child,
Come near me, I would feel your hand ; my brain
Is all disorder, grief has made me wild,
And sleep has brought disorder in its train.”
“ 'Twas but a dream,” said Amy ; “ calm yourself,
And let it pass away. Here, take my hand—
Assure yourself there is no danger near.
On your own couch, surrounded by warm hearts,
Your anxious daughter watching while you slept,
A troubled dream with silent step pass'd by,
And shook your startled spirit from its rest.”

“ A dream ! ” the mother said ; “ our God be prais’d !
In mercy, may it have no counterpart !
But ’twas so real : I beheld the face
Of your lov’d sister, who is far away
In India’s troubled land, pallid and wan,
Her hair dishevell’d, flying from the grasp
Of rapine and foul murder, but, alas !
In vain—the fatal stroke fell heavily.
Oh ! that dire shriek, the mingling of despair,
And agony, and woe intense, which struck
The heart’s remotest chord, and sent a thrill
Of anguish to its very inmost shrine,
Making it sick with sickness nigh to death.
Thank God it was but a distorted dream ! ”

Again she slept : the worn and wearied frame
Soon yielded to exhaustion ; near her still
Her patient daughter watch’d, and night came
down,
Casting its veil on nature—glorious night !

Bearing creation's jewell'd crown, and full
Of deep solemnity and wondrous awe.
Night ! thou great teacher of th' inquiring mind,
What myst'ries thou unfoldest, what a book
Is open'd in thy darken'd heavens above !
How deep thy lessons to pervading thought ;
Worlds beyond worlds are rolling through all space ;
Could we but travel, so they roll the same
Each in its sphere, in order, rul'd, upheld
By some Almighty hand unseen, yet known
By far pervading and unceasing pow'r.
Night ! thou unfoldest to the mortal gaze
Infinity of worlds which envious day
Conceals ; and robing them in golden light
Makest them letters of that mystic book
Sages have loved to read. Deep lessons there
Are writ the soul would learn—oh ! how those
lights
Shining in darkness draw the spirit on
To silence and to peace, and breathe a calm

Around an unknown way; there leap the thoughts,
And seem to mount towards unceasing rest.
They link us to the past and the departed,
The spirits we have lov'd—our other selves
Now in the world unknown, who went before
Down the dark valley of the shade of death,
Leaving a light behind them, and the marks
They made in passing, for our comfort left
And guidance in the dang'rous path they trod.
And thy dark vault, O Night! studded with stars,
Brings them to our remembrance, for they seem
Recorded in thy deep, mysterious book.
Those bright lights, twinkling through eternal space.
Stand like the monuments of lov'd ones gone,
Diff'ring in glory, brightness, magnitude,
As saints on earth excell'd in holiness,
Zeal, duty, warmth, deep earnestness, and love.
It is a glorious record! Lo! they stand
The glowing gravestones of the righteous dead,
Weaning us from this worn and troubled world

And leading up the spirit to the realms
Where reign the saints, the prophets, and the slain
For God, the martyrs of his sacred cause,
The fathers of his church, the holy men,
Faithful and just, the advocates of truth,
Triumphant now with Jesus, and at rest.
Reign in thy glory, Night, with peace profound !
Hush the perplexing thought, the troubled breast,
Shed gentle sleep across the wretched, soothe
The sufferer with soft slumber ! Thy sought boon,
So welcome to the sorrowing and forlorn,
Came with refreshing rest to Agatha.
She slept upon her couch, and by her side,
Heedless of coming night, with look intent,
And thought profound, was Amy watching still.

II.

From where Britannia, in her seagirt isle,
Sits the proud ruler of a vast domain,
Safe in her home of strength, while round her rolls
Her guardian ocean with eternal song,
Chafing her pebbly shores ; with airy wing,
And thought unfetter'd, speed we on our way
To where the Himalayas stretch their peaks
To meet the morning sun, and proudly gaze
On the far plain below. Calm and serene
Above all storm and tempest which may rage,
And sweep their middle pathway, while the height,
Wearing its crown of everlasting snow,
Looks down upon such tempests, and beholds
Fierce elemental war—the battle-field,

Where the mad whirlwinds strive, and hurricanes
Contend in wild disorder ; there the clouds
In masses roll along, the lightnings leap
From crag to crag across the chasm's mouth,
And to the hanging cliff and back again.
There, through the dark and cloudy bed, they cleave
A new and vivid way, and disappear,
Nor linger for the roar that after comes.
There the hoarse thunder rolls along the track,
And through the mountain pass reverberates,
Then echoes in the deep abyss below,
Mingling in strange confusion with the din
Of cataracts, and storm, and riven rocks ;
And whirlwind'sweeping on in mad career.
Yet all unmov'd the snow-crown'd summit sits,
Smiling with sunlight on its lofty head,
Though wild disorder revels at its base.
Like some gaunt giant hoary now with years,
Who heeds not tumults of his youthful days,
Nor fears their strength, for generations gone

Have taught him wisdom—quietly to watch.
And from his throne, by lapse of ages built,
Firmly resolv'd await the sure result,
And see the storm of fury pass away.

From Himalaya's mountains to the south
Lies India, with its many states, and powers,
And fertile lands, and nigh unbounded wealth ;
Yet not its own, for Britain holds the sway—
The sceptre of a foreign land is there.
From east to west, from north to south, is felt
The influence of the stranger's pow'r, which rules
Its native princes, thrones, and fertile plains.

Beside the Jumna, winding through the plain
To meet her sister Ganges, mingling there
The waters of a hundred mountain streams
To swell the sacred river, Delhi stands—
Delhi, the city of the great Mogul !
Fam'd far and wide with no uncertain fame,

Nor gain'd in modern days—long, long before
The Prophet woke the cry of war, or bar'd
His bloody sword for murder, Delhi stood,
The home of monarchs of no earthly race,
But from the gods descended—sun and moon
Gave of their children rulers for this land.

Time, fleeting Time ! whose rapid flight hath been
Through unknown ages, whose untiring wing
Ne'er resteth in its course, but ceaselessly
Pursuest year by year a noiseless way ;
Unseen, yet leaving as thou passest by
Impressions of the joyous hours of life,
Too lov'd, too sweet to be forgotten, rich
With all the halo and the magic hues
Which mem'ry casts around the past, and blends
Reality with fiction ; till we see
Only the bright excitement of the hour,
But heed not the dark clouds which o'er the sky
Of those our sunny days pass'd frequently,

Shading the deep blue of our happiness.
O Time, with hoary locks ! thou guardian
Of earth's remotest secrets, who didst see
The chaos of the world, when brooded there
The great Eternal Spirit, ere the light
Had penetrated darkness, or fair form
Or order risen at the Lord's command ;
Ere the creating Word will'd and so spake,
And from that dark chaotic mass appear'd
A world unmatched in beauty, lovely, good,
O'er which the morning stars together sang,
And shouted all the sons of God for joy.
Thou ancient sentinel, which age by age,
Sleepless, and ever on the watch, hast kept
A faithful record of the ways of men !
Give to the muse thy knowledge, draw the veil
Which hides thy secrets, and unsepulchre
The memories of the past, and let them come
With ruddy freshness as of yesterday !

Bounded by Drishadwati's stream, there lies
An ancient tract of land, which formerly
Was known as Bramhaverta ; here the gods,
From their eternal thrones descending, came
And made a home terrestrial—here they held
Their courts and reign'd in splendour ; from the
rest

Of the surrounding nations this they chose
For their especial favour, and the gifts
Divinity sometimes bestows to raise
Poor mortals in the scale of happiness,
And make them the bright heroes of the world.

Such heroes thence arose, brave and renown'd,
Admir'd and envied by the thronging crowd,
Born to be led and ruled ; without a thought
To cleave its own free way, but sluggishly
Content with its low lot to follow where
The stronger ever leads the weaker will.

So reigned the gods of yore and taught the race,
Adopted from among mankind, to war,
Conquer, subdue. retain ; and gave them priests
Instructed in religious rites, inspir'd
With a supernal knowledge, aptly nam'd
From the first great creating principle.
With pow'r to bless and curse ; yet to that law,
Written and given by the gods themselves,
Bound to conform their life, and not transgress
Its rules of holy discipline—to aid
The king in council, to instruct, to be
The guardian of his actions, and enforce
Justice and right—themselves to live apart
From common men and things ; in holiness
Excelling others as a race divine.

From such a source the Princes sprung who rul'd
Fam'd Bramhaverta's land in olden time,
And brought Bramarshi underneath their sway.
This last a sacred land, and Bramins born

Within its borders were esteem'd the best
And aptest teachers for the sons of men.

Soon was the sword of conquest drawn, and on,
Eastward, they made their way ; till Ayodha fell
Submissive, and gave up her right to rule,
And to her throne the stranger stepp'd, and took
Her sceptre for the solar race, which there
For fifty generations reign'd supreme.

Passing those generations, dim and dark
With age's hoary features, Rama comes
With light upon the scene—a hero he,
Fir'd with the love of conquest and of pow'r.
Soon known and fear'd, the nations trembling felt
Th' advancing of his armies—far away
The terror of his name had struck, he trod
The Deckan with victorious foot, and heard
The southern ocean chanting conqueror :
And saw her smile, and with approving face

Speak welcome, and with friendly spirit point
To where the spicy island, Ceylon, lay :
Invited onward still, allur'd he went,
And took the offer'd prize in Ayodha's name.

With Rama's death descends again the shade
Where dim oblivion holds a sway, nor gives
Much to th' inquirer. His successors rul'd,
And sixty Princes of his race were found
To hold the sceptre of their ancestor,
And hand his fame through generations down.

But peace at length was broken, and the sound
Of civil war was heard ; two claimants rose—
Two branches of the reigning family—
Disputing for supremacy and pow'r.
Pandu and Curu, both of royal birth,
Descended from one common ancestor—
Hastinapura the disputed prize.

Long rag'd the war, and friend was found 'gainst
friend

With hand uplifted—rival princes came
With stout assistance, and allies from far
Pour'd in their succours ; Deckan sent her sons
To aid the quarrels of her conquerors,
And Indus, looking upward from her bed,
Saw crossing to the bloody work of strife
Nations she knew not, but that from the west
They came with banded might :—in after time
She recogniz'd their features, saw them stand
Beside her stream as conquerors, and heard
The stranger's voice sound through the lapse of
years.

Long rag'd that war, and slaughter thinn'd the
ranks

Of conquerors and conquer'd ; merciless,
Grim death went stalking through the lines ; there
lay

Together stretch'd in death, who should have been
Bound by the ties of friendship ; but stirr'd up
By civil hate to cruel deeds of blood,
Together lay in death, as they had stood
Upon the day of battle—hand to hand
In strife ; till by necessity they fell
To stiffen in the cold destroyer's grasp.
Upon their wan and settled features lay
The look defiant, telling to the last
They would not yield so long as life remain'd.

The Pandus triumph'd, but a triumph won
By such reverses, friends cut off and slain,
Their army wasted—they a remnant left,
Lonely and desolate, to weep the loss :
It seem'd more like defeat than victory.
Their great ally no longer there to aid—
Chrisna, their hope and strength, whose prowess

oft

Had turn'd the scale of battle-fields, and borne
Glad victory along the way he took,
Return'd, alas ! in his own land to die—
By civil discord slain. Lonely and sad
At losses irretrievable, and friends
Cut off; with hopes and expectations gone,
Despairing of the future, some retir'd
And wander'd, where they knew not, mournfully,
Making the world their home ; until at length,
They perish'd 'mong the Himalaya's snows.

A few remain'd to build again the throne,
By social discord shaken to its base ;
To reconstruct the kingdom, and restore
Order and peace : 'twas done with time, and then
They fix'd on Dellhi as the seat of pow'r,
Where royalty in after time should reign.
Nor long its fame obscure : the civil strife
Soon faded from the mem'ry—twenty-nine
Succeeding princes rul'd on Delhi's throne,

And rais'd the city in magnificence,
And wealth, and splendour with their victories.

Time sped ! and after Pandu's race arose
The Rajpût princes, who successively
For twenty generations held the sway ;
When their proud rivals of Tomara's clan
Stepp'd in, and claim'd the sceptre for themselves.
And held it until Pritwi Raja's time,
Who fell before the conqu'ring Mussulman,
And left rich Delhi as the victor's spoil.

Such the false Prophet's hope ; long, long before,
When looking through the future he foresaw
His influence spreading through the wide wide
world,

From west to east, from its unfruitful home
Across the fertile plains of other lands,
In richness and in greatness growing still,
Till kings before it bent, and princes gave

Their aid to strengthen its increasing sway.
Long had the Mussulmans desir'd to see
Submissive to their rule rich India,
And often with invasion swept her lands ;
Sometimes successfully, and sometimes back
With loss and tumult driven to their homes,
But ne'er in Delhi stood till Pritwi's time,
When, though defeated on Tirouri's field
With slaughter and confusion, till compell'd
To fly for life and safety, they return'd
Again in after years with purpose stern.
Successes crown'd their efforts—through the
lines

Opposing they with fury rush'd, and brake
The barriers which so long had kept them back.
The king defeated fled, was taken, slain ;
The city plunder'd, and their wish complete ;
The Prophet's pow'r in India was supreme,
And ruin over Hindoo greatness spread.

So when huge ocean from his placid bed,
Reflecting back the glory of the skies,
Rises in fury by the tempest stirr'd,
And tries to overleap the boundaries
Which keep his waters from the fertile lands,
Oft baffled in th' attempt retires awhile
And fumes himself to slumber—with dull moan
Sinking to rest ; then rous'd again to strife
By some new angry outbreak, onward rolls
And sweeps the opposing barrier ; driven back,
Year after year, to the same strife returns,
Till worn by time the bulwark yielding gives
An opening to th' advancing flood, and sees
Sad desolation and a wreck ensue.

For near six centuries the Prophet's pow'r
Held a stern sway, and India bow'd her neck,
And gave her sceptre to the Mussulmans.
Forgetful of her liberties, her rights,
Her children waxed faithless—some forgot

Their ancient worship, and forsook the gods,
The victors of their father-land, and gave
Their homage to the false usurper's name :
Some, of necessity, compell'd by force,
But some most willingly, expecting thence
Favour and honour from th' invading foe.

As some fair tree which passing years have seen
Increase in stately beauty silently,
Till strong with age she proudly lifts her head
And bids defiance to the coming storm,
And feels secure—her gnarled roots below
Grasp firmly the sure earth—above, are spread
The branches of some generations' growth—
So had the Prophet's pow'r grown old: the roots
Had penetrated as in native soil,
Its branching influence extended wide,
When to the land another stranger came,
For Britain's flag unfurl'd ; her standing-place
Was small, but soon her eagle eye was bent

On conquest, and her path of victory
Ceas'd not till Delhi's city own'd her sway.

So fell the Prophet's pow'r, and English rule
Curb'd the rough tyrant and his cruelties,
And held him in submission ; but, alas !
Though captive and subdu'd, the silent thought
Brooded as upon wrong ; that old desire
Of universal rule his spirit stirr'd,
And fann'd the smould'ring embers into flame—
A flame which burst in dreadful fury forth,
Consuming in its madness ; breaking through
All known restraint and rule ; forgetting both
Duty and faith—uniting into one,
To stimulate it in the mad career,
Ambition, passion, anger, and revenge :
Then leaving desolation in its track,
And horrors over which the heart grows sick.

III.

The forest slumber'd in forgetfulness,
And silence mingled with the cooling shade,
Inviting to its bow'rs most temptingly.
Delicious refuge from an Indian sun—
Most grateful to the weary soul which needs
Rest from oppressive heat. A Bramin there
Beneath the shade in meditation walk'd ;
Sometimes he mutter'd as he paus'd, his words
Unheeded fell upon the silence near,
Melting in fainter sounds. His mind absorb'd
In grappling with uncertainties, while doubts
With hopes and fears together mingling came ;
And thus he reason'd with himself: " 'Tis so !
Our princes once were pow'rful, from the gods

They came, the children of the sun and moon,
And we their priests with gifts divine, to bless
Or curse, and guide them in true knowledge. Why
Are we so fall'n ? now as slaves we serve
A stranger nation—conquerors by the sword
Of those who should themselves be conquerors.
Where is the spirit of our fathers ? Rise !
Rama and Crishna, let your presence aid
Your captive children : while we sluggish lie
No help will come, we must bestir ourselves,
And strike the blow, if we would yet be free.
True are the words the Mussulman declar'd,
' The sword subdu'd us, and the sword again
Must give us back our freedom.' A few days,
And then, brave hearts, arise to liberty !"

Scarcely the thought had wing'd its silent way,
To vibrate through the spirit world, before
He, turning, saw the Mussulman approach.

A mutual greeting o'er, the Bramin said—
“ Welcome, brave servant of the Prophet ! now
Friendly in heart, though hostile in thy creed,
So should it be, ill feelings laid aside,
Our fends forgotten, link'd in amity,
We should unite against the common foe
To break his servile chain. How sped the work ? ”

“ Full well,” the Moslem answered ; “ hand in
hand

The Prophet's sons will march to victory.
Alla himself will bless—his word declares
A hundred years, and then our tyrants fall ;
Their power shall cease, and our captivity
Shall drink its sweet and terrible revenge.
No coward hearts are ours—each Moslem chief
Is ready for the contest ; ay, at once,
If such were needed—but we wait the day,
The fatal day appointed for the slaughter.

Hast thou conveyed the tidings? Will the Hindoo
Fight true and faithful by the Mussulman,
And rid the country of this hated foe?"

"Faithful and true," the Bramin said. "Ere now
The secret has been told—the country through
Has heard the sacred message; it is known
From Indus unto Brahmaputra's wave.
Since last we met, the mystic cake has sped,
And curs'd be he of Hindoo race who sees,
But answers not, the summons. May the Gods
Reject him as unworthy of his name,
His country, and his race! may he become
A wanderer upon earth! From Delhi's home,
North, east, west, south, with rapid foot, 'twas borne
By many a way, and many an ancient stream,
To town and village; and the sacred fanes
Of temples, and the citadels of kings,
Revealing the command—the daring deed,

And then the place of meeting. Soon our swords
Shall drink the life-blood of our enemies !”

So spake the traitors who had plann'd the deed
Of murder and rebellion ; thence to tread
The way ambition pointed to a throne.
From them the poison spread insidiously,
Till it imbu'd the minds of those they sway'd
With wrongs invented, and with hopes in vain,
Which vanish'd in their grasp ; and so went out
Leaving but disappointment, and the guilt
Which in due time receiv'd just punishment.

IV.

As dawn across the east broke quietly,
And chas'd the darkness with red fiery steeds
And silver winged lightnings, till the sky
Laugh'd with the many colours of the morn,
Changing and changing into countless hues ;
As light went dancing up that varied sky,
Robbing its tinted cheeks, till, one by one,
Each colour faded in the brighter flood,
And left the dome of heav'n without a stain,
Glorious and clear in sunlight ; and the earth
Sparkling with lustre, where in rainbow meads
The subtile rays went speeding on, and crept
Through branching trees, with wreathèd gems
 thereon,

Hanging in endless lines of grace, and full
Of wondrous beauty and deep speaking pow'r.

As morn so broke, and down the Jumna's stream
Pour'd a glad greeting, on the Meerût road
To Delhi a small troop of horsemen came.
Disorderly, infuriate, they seem'd
The remnant of a battle-field, o'ercome
By mad excitement—flying from the foe,
Or drunk with lawless plunder. Recklessly,
Bearing no doubtful signs of recent fray,
With savage joy they onward rode uncheck'd,
And reached the city as the morning sun
Burnish'd her turrets with his golden beams.

They cross'd the bridge without a question, slew
The keeper, and there left a guard ; then on
Through the Calcutta gate they made their way.
“ We come,” they cried, as flock'd the citizens
Around to learn their errand—“ We have come

To execute the mission of the Gods :
To reinstate the Moslem rule, and drive
The stranger from our land. No harm to you,
Good citizens of Delhi, but the foe,
Intruding Europeans—they shall die !”

The crowd approv'd, yet did it hesitate
To rise into rebellion, for the day,
The fatal day appointed, had not come.
It would inquire their mission, whence they came,
Their orders and authority ; one spake
And gave the question for the multitude.

“ We come,” the horsemen said, “ as messengers
To carry vengeance for committed wrong.
We come, but not too soon, though yet the day
Appointed for the slaughter is not here,
For vengeance will not tarry. We are men,
The soldiers of our nation—we stood by
And saw our comrades iron'd. Why ? Because

They would not be defil'd. 'Twas nobly done !
The law of Menu did forbid—they bore
Most manfully their punishment ; but He
Whose law they honour'd sent relief, He stirr'd
Our souls within, until we rose and smote
The punisher with punishment, and freed
Our comrades from confinement. Having struck
The blow, we wait not the appointed hour,
But mount the throne at once. Old Delhi's king
To-day shall be proclaim'd as emperor ;
And every one of the usurpers found
Shall meet a death of violence—the men
Unpiti'd shall be slain ; the women, too,
Shall feel the vengeance of the Hindoo wrong—
Dishonour'd and degraded, they shall die !”

Th' applauding shout of a surrounding crowd
Told but too soon the fuel well prepar'd
On which the spark had fall'n—no delay,
No hesitation—sympathetic spread

The spirit of rebellion : fearless they
Beneath his touch threw off restraint and cast
Their lot with the seditious, who but point
To some new rule and other dynasty.
“ Onward at once ! the palace walls are nigh,
The heir of the Mogul is there : the throne
Of Delhi yet shall rise again, and sway
The sceptre of this mighty land. Her arms,
So long renown'd, shall be renown'd once more ;
Her armies tread the plains victoriously,
And laden with rich spoils return again.
The reign of the Feringees soon will cease—
Its hundred years is wellnigh gone—the knell
Of its past glory now departing sounds,
Dying in echoes faint, and fainter still.
Our native army is prepar'd, and waits
Alone the fatal day ; but seemingly
The infidels, unconscious of the cloud
Which hung above them, dark and ominous,
And charg'd with fury ready to burst forth

In overwhelming terror, would transgress
The righteous laws of Menu, and compel
His servants to profane, defiling acts.
It might not be ! The angry Gods arose,
And vengeance quicken'd her too tardy step ;
E'en now she cries aloud, and comes to-day,
With you, her messengers, to speed the work."

Then woke a reign of terror ; wildly flew
The tidings through the city—" Law dissolv'd,
Death to the Infidels ! no mercy ! spare
Not young, nor old, and neither sex nor age !
As the destruction, the reward shall be."

On rode the troopers, murd'ring as they went,
Where'er an European crossed their way :
Among the first who fell a sacrifice
Were Fraser, Nixon, Douglas. Quickly spread
This tale of terror to the battery.
Without delay, the Fifty-fourth was sent

To check the scene of murder ; orderly
Through Cashmere's gate they marched, but at
the sight

Of those wild Sowars, gory with the work
Of slaughter, backward from their lines they rush'd,
And left their officers unarm'd, a prey,
Defenceless and expos'd to murd'rous hands.

Short work they made : the Europeans fell
Slain by that bloody crew. The Fifty-fourth,
No longer fearing the commander's word,
Join'd joyfully the rebel ranks, and rush'd
With them to crime and heartless butchery.

'Twere sick'ning and heartrending to relate
The horrors of that day—the hellish work,
The fiendish hate, by lust and passion led,
Drunken with blood and ruthless violence,
Which demon-like sat sated on its prey.

Deeds vile and monstrous, such as words refuse
To speak—such anguish language cannot tell—

Language and words were weak in utterance.
The olden barriers, which had stemm'd the tide,
Gave way, and in the stream of lawlessness
Went rushing like a flood, which having left
Its channel carries desolation through
Rich meads and cultivated lands, and leaves
The wreck of its wild passage. Noble trees
Uprooted from the standing-place of years,
And stately with hoar age ; the sapling shoot
Just putting forth its strength, and promising
In after years to lift itself on high,
And spread its graceful branches ; and the flow'rs,
Peerless in beauty, op'ning with sweet smile,
And winning with true loveliness, and drest
In robes of grace and modesty—apart
From vulgar gaze remov'd—in meadows far—
Secluded from the common step of men,
And shrinking from the vulgar touch and hand
With rude and hasty grasp. Alas ! in vain
They supplicate the raging flood—it sweeps

Unmerciful through their secluded home,
And spares not beauty nor their innocence.

So swept that flood of mutiny, when fell
The barriers of good order and restraint.
In Delhi's streets unheard-of butcheries
And perpetrated crimes were common things—
Crimes of the deepest dye, and cruelties
Which make the angry heart leap in its home,
And the cold chill pass over us, while flows
The blood from the extremities to gain,
By concentration at the seat of life,
New strength for the avenger's arm, and nerve
His stroke with something bitterer than death.

On rag'd that rebel flood : a multitude
Of outlaw'd plund'ring villains swell'd the stream ;
Each regiment mutinied, disorder spread,
And ruin and wild anarchy were felt
To hold the city in their reckless arms.

Enough ! the day of retribution waits :
Such evil deeds shall not escape ; e'en now
Th' avenger is at hand. Speed, Vengeance ! speed !
The cry of the dishonour'd calls thee on !
The guiltless, yet the outrag'd, and the child
Unconscious of all wrong and innocent,
Wond'ring to see its mother's face so chang'd,
And the rude features, and the ruder grasp
Which tears it from the arms of tenderness
To feel th' embrace of cruelty and death !

On, Vengeance ! on ! We might forgive the blow
For freedom nobly struck, if hand to hand,
And force to force oppos'd in battle fair—
The long-subdu'd rose up in arms again
To struggle with his conqueror, and break
The stranger's rule from off his father-land,
That he and his belov'd ones might be free.
This were a righteous blow the gods might bless—
A blow that every noble soul might strike

Though in the face of danger, yea ! of death.
A thousand mem'ries tempt it, where the land
Has fall'n from extended rule, and pow'r,
And greatness, and magnificence of reign.
They come ! those visions of the former days ;
With triumph and success, and mighty names,
Proud conquerors of the wide earth are seen
Passing in gorgeous pageantry along ;
And handing down to their posterity
A deathless fame, and spirit unsubdu'd.

In such a cause, the blow for freedom struck,
We honour and forgive ; and fairly strive
For that proud crown the valiantest must take.
But the foul deeds of slaughter which disgrace
The man below the brute, we pardon not :
The brave surpris'd and slain, the innocent
And feeble tortur'd by the hand of strength,
The modest and retiring, tenderly
Brought up, and guarded from the common gaze

And vulgar touch—these to be demons' sport,
Dishonour'd and outrag'd in pangs to die !

Ah ! worse than death ! expos'd to the vile

taunts,

And brutal treatment of that multitude ;

To hear the shout of that barbarian horde

Insulting, mocking, gloating savagely,

Till sated with excess and violence !

Ah ! cruelty refin'd ! in their last hours,`

Those trying hours of anguish, to compel

The mother to behold, with madd'ning woe,

The fiendish tortures of her little ones.

Who would forbear ? who pleads for mercy ? who

Lifts not the hand in vengeance ? Horrible

The work ! yet on the perpetrators went,

Black'ning their way with crime. On, vengeance !

on !

Check these mad demons in their work, and wipe

This blot from off the page of history !

Long was that day in Delhi ! long the night !
When the first fury of rebellion rag'd.
Soon came their fate to some, and happy they
If well prepar'd to quit their earthly home,
At once to leave that scene of woe, and land
Upon the shores of Paradise, where fade
The tumults of the world in endless peace.
Less blessed they, to whom the respite came
Which gave them to the ruffian's pow'r, to wait
The doom and orders of a brutish will :
Oh, terrible suspense ! more terrible
Than death itself, to look upon his shape
Made hideous with deformity, and girt
With hellish rites, and feel his influence
With tight'ning grasp grow firmer and more close,
And know it is impossible to flee.

Long was that day, and long the night, if deeds
Can lengthen time's existence ; such were there
As might have satisfied whole centuries !

On swell'd the rebel tide ; enormities
And crimes were plentiful on every side,
Enormities and crimes which pass belief :
While torture in refin'd inventive garb,
Dilating in mysterious cruelties,
With most ferocious aspect rent the soul.

V.

Some days had pass'd ; the king in council sat,
Around him were his counsellors in wrong,
Himself a weak old man, the instrument
Of those designing villains, who had stirr'd
The land to strife, and sow'd sedition's seeds ;
Who hop'd to reap the fruits and upwards step
To thrones, and pow'rs, and dignity, through blood :
The Bramin and the Moslem both were there.

Then spake the king—" How counsel you to act ?
Our forces are increasing, and the spread
Of your great movement now is known abroad.
The infidels have suffer'd ; in the sleep
Of false security you wisely smote.

Surpris'd in their supineness, they have felt
The Prophet's fiery zeal—the Moslem's sword
Unsheath'd for slaughter in its mightiness.

I deem'd not you would so successful be,
And trembled at the onset, but now feel
The tide of victory is flowing fast.

Great Alla's name be prais'd ! who nerv'd the
hand

To strike, and breath'd true courage to the heart
For daring deeds. Again on Delhi's throne
In all their olden splendour yet shall sit
Descendants of the mighty conquerors.

Subject awhile to England's haughty rule
The race of Timur bent the neck, but now
That time is past ; they shall arise in strength,
And shake away dull sloth, and manfully
Claim their lost rights and freedom, and seek
back

The privileges of a former day.

What say ye, my good friends? What tidings
come

Of things already done? How speaks report?"

"Well speeds the work," the Moslem said; "e'en
now

A righteous retribution has o'erta'en
The scoffing infidels; grim slaughter walk'd
Among their ranks, nor that in gentle form.
The city search'd has yielded up the race
Of our detested enemies. We gave
The most part to the drunken multitude
For sport, to make a holiday—then die;
But some among the maidens were reserv'd,
The fairest and most comely, for thyself—
They wait thy royal will. The news from far
Is cheering, and as messengers arrive
They tell of our successes. Many a town
Has risen for its freedom, and ere long
Will send its succours to support thy throne.

So far the Moslem element is true,
It looks for other days, another reign
Of glory and ambition ; and will go
Through danger unto death, if Alla bids—
If Alla and his Prophet lead the way.
Is it thus with the Hindoo ? Is he firm,
And willing to do battle for his creed ;
To brave the foe, and face the enemy—
How speaks our brother for his kindred race ?”

Then answer'd the old Bramin—“ I have seen
Long years go by, and in the forest roam'd,
A stranger to mankind, expos'd to rains
With doubtful raiment and unwholesome food,
There have I steel'd my heart with penances,
And learn'd to mortify myself, and liv'd
In strict conformity to that just law
Our fathers from the gods receiv'd, that so
I might propitiate th' eternal pow'rs
To look upon our nation, and forgive

Aught of impiety or guilt, and raise
From thralldom up, lost freedom to restore,
And give back India to our rule again.
And now the light is dawning—lo ! I see
Its streaks along the dusky night of time,
Like the forerunners of a joyous morn,
Each moment as they brighten they foretell
The vanishing of darkness, and the flood
Of light now coming on to overspread
And introduce a future day, all bright,
Serene, and gladsome, from the dawn till eve.
Already has the shout gone forth which swells
From land to land, and as it goes imparts
New life, and vibrates in a thousand hearts
Where sympathetic chords are struck ; and still
Shall vibrate on, for India's sons respond
To the loud call of truth and liberty.
The sword ere now has dimm'd itself with gore,
And drunk the blood of those who bid us use
Th' unclean, unholy thing. Ne'er be it sheath'd

Till their proud sway be broken : till the sons
Of Brahma by their council rule the land ;
Ere this the word has pass'd in secrecy,
And thousands by that sacred word are pledg'd
To rise when comes the needed hour, and strike
Th' invader with a valiant arm ; nor rest,
Nor backward from the contest shrink, till they
See England's rule no more predominant,
And all intruders driven from our shores."

So spake the Bramin, and the king replied—
“ 'Tis well ! our cause is prosp'ring gloriously ;
With such determination, and the nerve
To carry out in action, soon our throne
Shall firmly stand. Our ancient city kept,
And well defended by our faithful sons,
Need fear no foreign foes, though numerous
And known in prowess, to the walls they come.
Doubtless ere long that common enemy,
Reviving from his terror-stricken state.

Will march against us with collected force.
He is no craven foe, nor will he yield,
Without a struggle to retain his hold,
These fair possessions he so long has kept,
And reap'd therefrom such harvest, and increas'd
The wealth and greatness of his native home.
Again to strive in battle he will come
With will determin'd conqu'ring or to die.
Our forces must be ready, and our walls
Prepar'd for his attack. How counsel ye?
Let those instructed in tried wisdom tell."

Again the Moslem spake—" Along the walls
Let garrisons be plac'd who faithfully
Will guard them 'gainst th' approaching foe,
should he

Come unexpected and with suddenness,
Or under cover of the slumb'ring night.
So shall he be repulsed and kept at bay
Till an alarm be spread, and aid arrive.

Nor let this one precaution serve ; that we
May have due notice of his coming, send
Your scouts abroad on every side, to watch
His movements and his numbers, and report
Whether, with the small force now left, he dare
Approach our strong position ; or sits still
Waiting fresh succours from his distant home.
With his diminish'd army it were wise
To tarry and defend each citadel
Till reinforcements come ; his present force,
Disjointed and in stations far apart,
If through great dangers could united be,
Is but a handful 'gainst our multitudes.
Bereft of his allies, our native troops,
Who have or in due time will mutiny—
His right hand as it were that he hath train'd
For prowess in the deadly battle-field
Against himself uplifted—it were much
For him to hold his own, or safely flee
Unscathèd from the contest. Such reports

Come to us daily from the provinces ;
We hope to hear ere long not one remains
Of his accursed race. Oude sulkily
Dissatisfied and brooding over wrongs
Stirs her unsettled spirit ; Lucknow waits,
Dissembling, till an opportunity
Arrives, and then ferociously will smite.
O'er Cawnpore crafty Nana hovers like
Some watching bird of prey, and with fell swoop
In an unguarded moment will descend
With glitt'ring eye and savage heart, and strike
Ruthless and deep his talons, and heed not
The pleading cry of innocence, nor spare
His terror-stricken, tender, quiv'ring prey.
Calcutta and Benares, too, are ripe,
Prepar'd for action when the hour shall come ;
And Agra, and the tribes extending far
To ancient Indus, and where falls the shade
Of the vast Himalayas, and where run
The fresh'ning waters of a thousand streams—

'There are our friends—there beat the myriad
 hearts

In sympathy with ours, and anxiously
Await th' arrival of the messenger,
Swift rumour, with its hundred varied tongues
To tell how speeds our glorious enterprize.

“ This do : 'tis needed in the present hour,
To cheer the faithful, to inspire the brave,
To turn the wav'ring and the doubting ; send
A proclamation in your royal name,
That all may know we have a king again,
That Delhi's throne is now pre-eminent.
Invite your subjects to maintain your rights,
And guard you from th' aggressor, and in turn
Promise protection and security.”

Such counsel met th' approval, and forthwith
A royal proclamation issued forth
Calling on Hindoos and Mahomedans

To band together in the common cause ;

To act courageously, and not to leave

“ The seed of devils in a single place.”

But as in Delhi, so in every town

Where sped the royal mandate, they should rise

And slay without exception, pitiless

To age, or form, or sex ; if infidels,

Their destiny was settled—let them die.

“ They had decreed to rob us of our faith,

To make us Christians by deceit or force ;

Their purpose had been thwarted, and to save

Ourselves and our religion we stood firm,

Nor quail'd beneath the threat'ning hand of

death,

But turn'd his grasp against our enemies.”

Thus ran the royal mandate ; and proclaim'd

The emperor of Delhi's power supreme.

He would reward the obedient who pledged

Their true allegiance, and would quickly raise

The most deserving to high offices.
His soldiers would be paid, and just demands
Be satisfied when peace could be restor'd,
Success no longer doubtful, he had ta'en
The offer'd reins of government—the throne
Was now establish'd firmly ; with good troops,
Already disciplin'd and thousands strong,
He held the city well supplied with arms.
Soon would he seek the remnant of his foe,
And drive them from each resting-place, and see
His people guarded and their wrongs avenged.

Night came ! disorder through the city reign'd
And insubordination ; the flush'd troop
No longer felt restraint, and every man
Did what was right in his own eyes—he saw
A field of plunder as for tumult there,
To which he rush'd with utter recklessness,
Nor car'd who should command, nor who obey.

Apart from this wild scene that rag'd around,
Secluded from the common gaze, and deep
In consultation and conflicting plans,
The Bramin and the Moslem sat ; dark care
Was on the countenance of each, when spake
The Bramin to his brother plotter thus—

“ True ! ’twas the Prophet’s sword, which bravely
cut

Its way from desert Araby to mount
The ancient and proud throne the Hindoo held.
The wand’rer’s choice was wise—from sterile home
Most barren and unfruitful, land of rock
And desert, he to fertile India came.
He saw her fruits, her more luxuriant land,
Her palaces and royal domes, and felt
The sweetness of her balmy atmosphere,
And then forgot the desert land he left :
And sat him down contentedly and ruled
The destinies of a far older race.

Then came the stronger hand, which laid the pow'r
Alike of conquer'd and of conqueror
Submissive to its rule ; and if that hand
Be driven from its holding, which shall sway
The royal sceptre of proud Delhi's throne,
Mahomedan or Hindoo ? or shall both
United for the future rule the land ?”

“ Time, which sets all things right,” the Moslem
said,

“ Shall settle this hereafter ; but forsooth
If Hindoo share with the Mahomedan
The dangers of the contest, he should share
The glories of the triumph : let us take
Alike the spoils of victory. The sway
May be divided 'mong the fittest men.
Few are the minds which rule the multitude
With Hindoo or Mahomedan ; the mass
Follow the bidding of some master-mind :
Whether 't is Alla bids them to the fight

Or Brahma, their impression is the same—
For God and their religion they will go.
’Tis no time now to settle those affairs
The future will bring with it ; questions grave,
The settlements of kingdoms, and the sway
Of monarchs, and the gift of crowns—let these
Await their day for judgment, it will come.
Our present work which presses closely now
Is to unite discordant elements,
To keep this rebel soldiery in bounds
Which now into excesses madly runs,
And make our new created emperor
Give substance by his name to our designs.”

Time tarried not ! the midnight came and pass’d,
And morning’s rosy presence was at hand !
The Bramin had departed satisfied
That glorious days might yet arise, and shine
As formerly upon the Hindoo race,
Which now too long had bow’d submissively,

Nor claimed the ancient honours of its sires.
The Moslem was alone, and gentle sleep,
Which should have brought refreshing energy,
And rest, and vigour to the wasted frame,
Came not with her kind influence—afar
She fled affrighted by the multitude,
And din, and wild disorder of the scene ;
She loves not noisy strife, nor the quick pulse
Of passion and excitement, but the calm,
The holy calm of peace. There will she come
Alighting with the downiest, softest wing,
And touch so gentle, that we heed it not ;
Yet feel its welcome presence. Soothingly
She lulls the wearied body, and drives back
The busy and distressing cares of earth ;
And opens from the scene of many woes
A strange, mysterious pathway, and allures
The spirit thither to a world, her own—
That wondrous world of silentness, and breathes

Recruiting strength around her visitant
To carry back to its exhausted frame.

But far away, and tempted not that night,
She shunn'd the dwelling of the Mussulman.
With step impatient here and there he pac'd
His room, while anxious thoughts came rapidly.
On the successes of that lawless band
Mingling together in disorder ; like
The waters of a hundred rivulets
Which hurricane or tempest on the hills,
Or mountain lake bursting its boundary,
Send leaping to the plains, with no sure course,
Spurning the usual channel—breaking down
The barriers which oppose them, mingling
still
In strange confusion, yet with added strength.
Unbridled and ungovernable, wild,
Making their lawless and destructive way.

On the success of such a dang'rous host,
Reckless and wilful, well the Moslem knew
Depended thrones and kingdoms. He had sought
Long time to sow the seeds of discontent
Among the native army, thus to raise
Revolt, and by it seize the reins of pow'r.
With such an army, disciplin'd and train'd,
Obedient to his will, he hop'd to see
The Prophet's sway again predominant :
And battles fought, and victories complete
As those of Mahmud, or the house of Ghor,
Or Timur the invader, savagely
Sweeping proud nations from his path, and there
Leaving the footprints of a conqueror ;
Or Baber, his descendant, who claim'd back
The throne of Delhi as his right, and came
With victory and pomp to reign thereon.

Such visions oft before the Moslem's mind
Flitted, and with rich brightness dazzling sped

Along a dangerous way ; yet tempting him
To follow onward, seeing but the light
To vanish soon in darkness ; heeding not
The steeps and dangers where the pathway led.
But then the time for action came ; the seed
Of mutiny had taken root—the force
By which he hop'd to mount to Delhi's throne
Had risen 'gainst its masters. It was there,
Tasting the sweets of freedom, and perchance,
From its lewd revelry of lawlessness,
Would not return to order when requir'd.
Then was the time for action ! so to use
This lawless force to answer private ends,
To keep it in restraint sufficiently
That it might not forget its duty, when
Requir'd to meet the enemy, nor yield
Th' advanc'd position with such daring won ;
But confident in strength united hold
The gain'd advantage, till triumphantly
They could defy their hated foe, nor fear

To strike him in his guarded home, and drive
Him from each stronghold of their native land.
Then was the time for wily counsel ! so
To take away the Bramin's fears, and lull
His rous'd suspicions that the Moslem aim'd
At re-establishing the Prophet's pow'r
Entire, and in its old predominance
Over the Hindoo as a servile race.
Though this the final aim, it might not be
Made known ; but lurking with dissembler's smile
Await the time for its accomplishment.
The Bramin's aid was needed in the strife
For ridding India of that master arm,
Which rul'd both Hindoo and Mahomedan.
Sleepless and anxious with unceasing thought
The Moslem scaun'd the pathway he must tread ;
New dangers thicken'd round him, unforeseen,
Unthought of, unexpectedly they rose,
And phantom like wearing terrific form.

He might not flee, he must abide the strife
And meet the foe ; it was his own desire,
The path he mark'd out for himself, his choice—
The choice ambition prompted him to make.
Onward, then ! on ! the fatal road lay there ;
Forward alone the pathway—no retreat,
No hope, no mercy, but in victory.
Oh, for some mighty pow'r !—his thoughts went up
For an eternal strength. Alla ! descend
And gird thy servant with the Prophet's sword,
Give concentration to our scatter'd plans,
Curb these rebellious mutineers, unite
The elements discordant, let them blend
Together to restore our shatter'd throne.
Now is the time ! thy favour give, for now
The enemy are terror struck, and lie
Smitten by the avenger's hand. The time
Is come, if we be e'er to rise again.
Upon our quick decision, and the way

We use our opportunities for good,
Our deeds of daring in a holy cause,
Thy favour, gracious Alla, and this strife,
The Destiny of Moslem's race depends.

VI.

Wake, Britain, to thy danger ! wake ! the sound
Of war has spread itself beneath thy rule ;
Thy pow'r is set at nought, thy arms defied ;
Thy sons and daughters destin'd to a fate
At once atrocious and unmerciful.

Wake from thy slumber and supineness ! see
What danger is around thee ! thy false trust
Encircles thee in peril. Rouse thyself !
Lest to designing craft and treachery
Thou unsuspecting shouldest fall a prey.

War's sounding voice is heard—for mutiny
And terrible rebellion are abroad,
Like some fell monster, stalking through the land :
Unsightly and inhuman, carrying death,

And ruin, and destruction in their arms.
Through India spreads the rapid, startling sound,
Ill tidings speed with no slow messenger.
From west to east—from east to west alike
Confused murmurs blend tumultuously,
And deep and deeper swell, as on they pass
From place to place ; their meaning more distinct,
Their voice more clear, telling the same sad tale—
Rebellion, murder, consternation, woe !

To Simla sped that cruel sound, and there
Made known the treach'rous discord. Anson saw
The danger of the crisis ; trifling then
Were fatal ; he to reach Umballa sought,
Thence push to Delhi and defeat the foe.
With eastern haste he to Umballa came,
But there delay detain'd him—there he found
No siege-train ready for th' emergency,
No preparation 'gainst the fatal day.
Delay ! how trying to th' impatient mind,

When thought outruns slow action, and performs
Wonders in its own world, and so comes back
Dissatisfied, astonish'd that we move
With crawling steps along, while wing'd it flies,
And finds far space no lasting obstacle
To its pervading pow'r.

The first delay

Surmounted and deficiencies supplied,
Onward he march'd to Kurnaul, there to make
A rest for ever—that was his long home,
His tarrying place on earth—no more to see
His troops move proudly forward, nor to hear
The sound of music, prelude of the fight.
There must he rest ; there bid a long farewell
To earth and its endearments ; there see fade
The honours he was nearing, feel that all
The glory, and the pomp, and pride of pow'r
Were short and fleeting, and of no account,
Because they must be yielded up at death.

He learn'd the lesson then, if not before,
How frail is poor humanity—a breath
Of a sweet summer day, which softly dies,
Subsiding into what we cannot tell.
'Twas there, but now 'tis gone ; so much we know,
But further our poor knowledge fails to aid.
In honour's path he may not walk again ;
An enemy has come, but not the one
Expected ; by a way unknown he came,
Mysterious and unseen—no sentinel
Kept watch for his arrival : at an hour
Not look'd for then he came ; the General
Unready and surprised was captive ta'en.

Mighty the pow'r of that arch enemy ;
Who in ten thousand forms pervades the world,
Unseen by mortal eyes ; till suddenly
The veil which hides his features is uprais'd,
And then the destin'd victim sees him stand
With bold front—face to face in hideousness.

An enemy to most, a friend to few
When dire necessity needs such a friend,
And wretchedness would seek his cold embrace.
An enemy to most, unsightly e'en
In his most comely dress, when fleeting time,
His great ally by long companionship,
With gentle and decaying touch reminds
The aged their long race is wellnigh run ;
Reminds them of this lost unwelcome truth,
And bids them look on that approaching form,
Who soon with pitiless, remorseless hand
Will bear them to the grave. Most comely he
When in such garments clad, but terrible
When rob'd in pestilence he walks the earth,
With dire and rapid step. Yet more, far more
Repulsive, loathsome, when in strange attire,
Tatter'd and rent with brutal violence
And deeds inhuman, he stalks wildly forth ;
In truth the king of terrors, girt about
With signs of bloody pageantry : around,

The demon host of frightful ministers,
Pain, anguish, torture, murder, butchery.

Such the gaunt enemy, who suddenly
In pestilential form to Kurnaul came,
And captive took the British General.

So Anson died ;—and the command forthwith
Devolv'd on Barnard. “ On, Sir Henry, on !
Thy countrymen at Delhi need thy aid !
Doubt not thy gallant troops, they will respond
To every brave design ; nor hesitate
Wherever duty leads them, though the path
Be steep, and garrison'd with enemies.”

Soon was the order known—with weary limbs,
And frame exhausted by an Indian sun
They onward march'd to Alipore, and there
From Ghazeeoodeenugger came the force
Of Wilson fresh from victory, to join

Their yet but little army pressing on
With vengeance to the seat of mutiny.

Midnight had scarcely pass'd, ere the command
Was given to advance upon and drive
The rebels from their stronghold. On the road
Four miles away they had entrench'd themselves,
And would dispute the passage. The small force
Of Britain, ever ready when required
For action, but more animated then,
As time of vengeance long delay'd drew on,
As near'd the opportunity to smite
The treach'rous Sepoy for his deadly wrong;
With hand prepar'd and still increasing wish,
And thirsting for the battle's strife, those few
Of England's valiant sons, with ready step
Beneath the soft and welcome cool of night
Press'd on the dang'rous way; and when red morn
Tinted the changing sky with rainbow hues,
And rays of light came dancing with quick step

Making the dim and doubtful visible,
They found the foe prepar'd, and fortified
In strong position guarded carefully,
And confident in strength defying them.

Short was the strife, an hour suffic'd to force
Th' intrench'd position of their enemy.
An hour and he had yielded, driven back
By Britain's dauntless and unflinching sons
Who beard grim death in his selected home ;
Defying threats and heeding not his frown,
Nor fearing when with angry hand uprais'd,
And dart already poised, he waits to hurl
His fatal weapon 'gainst the comers on.
Short was the strife, and soon came victory,
But came with loss : the gallant Chester lay
Among the slain, and found a soldier's grave.

O'eraw'd by the superior daring, struck
By terror at th' advance of Britain's arms,

The rebel force retir'd along the way,
Protected and made ready for defence ;
But all in vain, the conqu'ring few rush'd on
And swept before them all resistance ; drove
The rebels at the bayonet's point, and forced
Secured positions, and disputed spots,
As step by step they won the guarded way,
Nor rested from continuous victory,
Till, harass'd and disorganized, the foe
With terror-stricken hearts to Delhi fled.

VII.

Old England's summers do not always smile
With sunny days and clear unclouded skies.
Its varying climate intermingles oft
The lengthen'd days of June with passing show'r,
Mementoes of the spring-time lately gone ;
Or with the dismal frown of wintry days
Shuts out the deep blue firmament on high.
More favour'd than was usual in such clime
The summer time of 'Fifty-seven passed,
And wended tow'rds its close. The autumn tints
Had not yet spread their glory on the earth,
But full and ready for the reaper's hand
The golden harvest tarried, and proclaim'd
In plentiful abundance to the world
The bounty of the Giver of all good.

Of such a summer 'twas the brightest day,
And from his crimson bed of early morn,
Increasing in resplendent brilliancy,
The majesty of day rode proudly on
Along his ancient and unclouded course,
Making the skies more blue, and looking down
On earth with radiant and benignant smile,
As if no woe, or aching hearts were there.
So little does great nature sympathize
With sorrow in the world, that on she walks
Calmly with even step ; nor stays to look
With pitying eye on anguish ; or to weep
O'er the strewn wreck of violence and death.

That day sad tidings spread. The Indian Mail
Had come, and brought intelligence which rent
With anguish many a watching, anxious mind.
Alas ! it was not rumour then, but truth
Confirm'd and known ; and hope which held on
doubt

Fled as it came, and dread reality,
With features mark'd and unmistakable,
And hideous form stood forth in nakedness.
Truth came ! a woeful tale, unmagnified
By rumour ; for with all her hundred tongues
Inventive rumour scarce could magnify,
So foul the deeds of outrage and of blood.
To many a home it came, and smote the heart
With bitterness and woe, intenser still
Where wealth, and state, and greatness held the
 sway ;
Nor bow'd themselves to common wants and cares
Which poverty entails on many men.
So came the truth, like an omnipotence,
And spoke and would be heard ; no putting off,
No thrusting from the presence. On it march'd
Through gateway and through hall, nor stay'd to
 ask
If an intruder it were deem'd, but stood
Th' unwelcome guest, who paralyz'd rebuke ;

Spoke in smooth, even tones no mystery ;
Froze laughter into sadness with a look ;
E'en from the thoughtless claim'd attention ; bid
Each heart be still in silent wretchedness.

To Agatha it came among the rest,
Worn with increasing doubt, and long suspense.
And cruelly it smote—smote the weak form
Already wasted with anxiety,
And thought, deep craving thought. Quenel'd
was the light

Of hope, its dim and nigh exhausted ray,
Flick'ring for longer life 'midst doubts and fears,
Went out extinguish'd by the sudden blow.
And gloom and darkness fell, not like the night,
Illumin'd with its gems and studding stars,
Or gilded with the maiden moon who full
And glowing 'mid the deep'ning gloom goes on
In silent glory tow'ards her midnight throne.
Not such as this, but darkness deeper far

More trying, more distressing, more intense—
The agonizing darkness of despair.

Ruthless and stunning was the blow which fell,
And Agatha succumb'd and prostrate lay.
Her frame exhausted, and with mind unhinged
She sank oblivious in forgetfulness,
Which nature brings to lull acutest grief.
Long time unconscious, she at length awoke
To all the sorrow of reality.
Nay worse ! reality thrice magnified
By quick imagination picturing,
And concentrating upon one the woes
Of many, and that one belov'd, our own.

Then rose the stream of woe, swift and intense,
And foam'd against the hindrances which lay
Across its new form'd channel ; and among
Uprooted feelings murmur'd and swept on
Unconscious of resistance, till its course

Was mark'd and known ; and every obstacle
Smoother'd or carried from its place, and taught
The pow'r of stern necessity. How time,
Or habit, or endurance, joy or woe
Mark out a channel for themselves, and keep
Their wayward course deep'ning in after years !
Swift was the stream, and noisy for a time,
And then its angry passion died away,
Its murmur ceas'd to chide ; but onward still
With hurrying force it went, till under shade
In blessed quietude it seem'd to sleep.
Deceptive that fair face ! beneath there roll'd
The fatal flood, made heavy and increas'd
By streamlets from the spirit world, which blend
Reality with fantasies, and press
Unwelcome dreams upon the fever'd brain.

VIII.

In the far south on the horizon's edge,
When all is hazy sunlight, and the breath
Of summer sultry with oppressiveness,
Anon their rises a small cloud, and up
The distant skies it climbs mysteriously,
Stealing with cautious step along its path
Like beast upon its prey, and upward still
Continuing its free course. Behind there comes
Another and another, until gloom
And darkness stain the distant blue, and shade
Falls like a sable mantle on the earth ;
And earth puts on the dress, and looks again
To heav'n with gloomy face, and sympathy
Increases as the thronging clouds climb on

And pile themselves in mountains ; dark and
charged
With thunder at their base, their summits lit
With symmetry and beauty ; crown'd with crowns
Of pearl, and fring'd with dazzling light, and clad
In robes of snowy whiteness soft and pure,
Distinctly mark'd against the deep deep blue,
Without the wintry atmosphere, which chills,
And freezes, and repels ; but lazily
Breasting the clear and azure firmament
With warm and genial face ; and beckoning
To most delicious heights, where sweet repose
Seems seated upon glory, and enthron'd
In solitude and peace ; alluring there
To climb on airy steep, through which the sun
Breathes lustrous hues, and rich magnificence.
With glory thus around their summits spread
And dark'ning to their base, the mountain clouds,
With stately and majestic step, march on
Till heav'n is overspread, and thunders roll,

First murm'ring in the distance ; nearer when
The lightning's flash is seen most vividly,
Leaping from sky to earth, and writing lines
Of fire across the darkness, where the steeds
Of death go flying to their distant prey.
And then the whirlwind's rush, when the mad
storm

Comes sweeping on with fury, and the hail
In wild disorder driven through the air,
Partaking of the tempest's revelry
Descends to earth, and leaps again on high
And dances with its fellows ; and then falls
And melts and is forgotten, for his day
Is pass'd ; the plaything of an angry hour
Of some deep passionate outbreak, which goes on
Nor heeds the wreck behind, nor instruments,
Nor lives expended for its fitful mirth.

At such a time, sweet is the distant ray
Of light which penetrates the murky gloom,

And cleaves the clouds above ; till op'ning there
A way from storm and darkness, shows the sky
All clear and blue ; recalling other times,
Long days of sunshine, sacred memories,
And summer scenes on which no darkness fell ;
And breathing present peace from far, unfolds
Tranquillity beyond the tempest's rage.

So through the storm of grief, which rudely

swept

From India into Britain, and with woe

Froze hearts and homes, there came a ray of

light

To Amy—Henry whom she lov'd was safe.

A letter told his health ; one from himself

To her—a letter breathing constancy,

Truth, love, and words to be remember'd long.

And rumour told him brave, and magnified

With busy speech his gallant deeds, and mark'd

The path of glory he should one day tread.

There is a river of a world-wide fame
Which sluggishly moves onward, in its course
Watering most fertile meads ; by sacred haunts
Famous in song ; by castle walls it flows
Where stately tow'rs and hoary battlements
Rise in majestic form above the flood,
And mirror'd in the deep dark pool below
Tell passing ages to look on and see
How small a change across their greatness comes :
A little hoary here and there with years
Seems but the touch of beauty, and the tint
Of dignity to such ancestral home.
On winds that sleepy stream through meadows far,
And 'neath the hanging woods ; and by the home
Where genius once arose, and liv'd and walk'd
The earth like common mortals, and gave birth
To thought—such thought as dwells but with the
wise
And gifted ; which engraves for after years
The mem'ries of the past on fleeting time

With characters of such true vital fire,
That through long centuries they shine, and draw
With gravitating influence ; and men
Behold the light, and wonder, and come near
To read their golden wisdom. Lessons writ
From out the heart and speaking to the heart ;
Words, characters, and thoughts from out the man
Taken with skilful hand, and to the man
Speaking again with deep intensity.
By battle-field that river flows and hears
The distant sound of savage strife, the cry
Of hate, which up from civil discord springs
Fiercer than when the deadly struggle sets
Against a foreign foe ; then gliding on
Rolls and forgets, itself ere long to be
Forgotten—its existence cease—its name
Fade as things earthly quit this mortal scene.

Beneath the shade of ancient trees, which crown'd
The summit of a hill, whose sloping sides

Went down and drank the waters of that stream,
Sat Amy on the summer afternoon
When evil tidings spread : she stole an hour
From watching, and from sickness which now lay
Exhausted and unconscious in deep sleep.
An hour she stole, an hour of solitude
Sweet to the burden'd spirit ; there to be
Herself—to let her swelling heart break forth
And cast away its load, and melt itself
In weakness ; with no eye to see, no ear
To listen to the sound, and only one
Companion of that hour of joy or grief—
Serene and list'ning Nature, who sits by
With silent patience watching, and awaits
The lull, when it restoring balm applies,
And comforts with kind whisperings, and soothes
With touch the tend'rest and most delicate.

All is not dark on this sin stricken earth,
Across its surface there are precious spots

Sacred with richest mem'ries, over which
The heart leaps while we walk, and the gone
past

Comes thronging with a denser atmosphere,
Till the thick breath grows difficult, and life
Seems strangled by its own intensity.

Such was the spot where Amy sat—her eyes
Were red with weeping. Was it carking grief,
Corroding with its unseen touch the bloom
Of comeliness and beauty, caus'd those tears?
Or was it joy—intensest happiness
Which ever fill'd the heart, and gratitude
United; until overflowing full
They burst, as bursts the chargèd cloud, and
sheds

Itself in show'r's, and then dissolves away
In the clear, fresher atmosphere of heav'n?
Whence sprung those show'rs of tears? Give
answer ye

Who thus have sat and wept in solitude.

'Twas a delicious autumn afternoon
A year or two before, which sped along
As speeds full happiness ; until the cool
Of night came on, and length'ning shadows grew,
And warn'd a festive party from the woods
To home ; but one upon the chosen spot
Where Amy now was sitting, linger'd there
To watch the setting sun, and eventide
Put on her golden robes, and intermix
With light and shade the distant landscape o'er.
Fix'd was his eye upon the scene ; his thoughts
Absorb'd ; his longing spirit felt the pow'r
Of Nature's all pervading influence,
Writing her wond'rous lessons on the soul,
And pouring through Imagination's realms
The airy forms we love ; too fanciful
For earth's rude fingers, yet too manifest
And real to be rashly cast away.
He heeded not th' approach of one who came
With quick elastic step, and hurrying on

Thinking herself deserted in the wood.
Amy of summers gone—of late the child
Who grew into his heart—now reaching up
To womanhood, with all the bloom of health
Fresh'ning upon her face, and beauty there
Smiling in its own happiest mood, and lit
With light and loveliness unspeakable.
Through her deep eye beam'd that eternal blue
Which mirrors in itself infinity,
Lustrous and without end ; which fascinates
To an absorbing vortex, and draws on
Nearer and nearer still the willing soul
With a delicious dream of sweetest joy.
In loose and mingled gracefulness, her hair,
Dishevell'd by the wind and exercise,
In rich profusion on her shoulders hung.
With gladsome thought, unconscious how swift
time
Steals furtively away, far had she stroll'd,
And now return'd in haste ; her pathway lay

Where Henry drank the evening scene ; she

paus'd

A moment ere she spoke.

“ Watch you the clouds

And sailing moon to-night ; or may we hope

Your presence at our home ? Can no fair face

Seduce you from your lonely reveries

And solitary rambles ; shunning men

And joys that others seek ? Away to-night

With us, the house will laugh with merriment ! ”

He, starting at her words, replied, “ To-night

I meant to be your guest, and hear the sound

Of mirth which men call joyous ; you shall draw,

If such be worth your while, my heart away

From its lone worship ; I will give myself

A captive to your hands, but bind me not

Save with love's silken cords. Be merciful,

And lead me to thine own sweet world, and give

Joys I have never tasted. I will watch

Another time the moon and drifting clouds,
And draw from them deep lore. 'Tis not forbid'n
To gaze on silent glory, and the worlds
Which win us from this earth ! Dost thou not
love

Our great instructress, Nature ? Is there not
A vast, pervading, wond'rous sympathy
In all that is around us, and which speaks
Like spirit unto spirit through the soul ?
E'en now it steals upon the senses ! now
It draws us from our earthly selves, and gives
A more divine existence, exquisite,
Intense, and rapturous ; for the eventide
Is flooding us with glory. There !" and she
Drew nearer to his spirit words, " behold
Yon setting sun in true magnificence.
The west is all on fire ; the dying king
Grows glorious on his deathbed, and bestows
His diadems of splendour ; now the clouds
Which linger round his latest hours grow bright

And lustrous in his presence—the dark shade
Which hung across them vanishes, they smile
And take the golden crowns and put them on,
And wear their royal dresses interwove
With light and colour mixèd wondrously.
Now leap the rays of light, and kiss the east,
And make his dark cheek ruddy with fresh bloom,
Till in the sombre shade of purple eve
They mingle and so fade. Hush'd is each sound
Save yonder waterfall, which murmurs on,
And now speaks like a melancholy soul
Smitten amid the growing silentness
With consciousness of solitude, and so
Complains of its lone lot ; and ever tells
Unceasingly, throughout the live-long year,
As day by day it leaps into the pool
Shady and dim with overhanging boughs,
The same sad tale, ‘ lower and lower still
Fate bids us ever roll.’ Against the sky
In perfect outline lie the stately trees

Rob'd in the richer garments Autumn gives—
And touch'd with magic tints. Beneath yon firs
Clump'd and dark with massiveness, there peeps
The crimson and resplendent west, which glows
Intenser by the contrast—such no stroke
Of artist's pencil can delineate,
Or vivify on canvass. Where the birch,
Fring'd with its tender twigs, hangs gracefully,
And the broad chesnut with full rounded form
Lets fall its golden leaves, tender and frail,
And yielding to the chill of night ; there rise
The turrets of an old ancestral hall,
Gray with long years, and haunted memories
Which bear us through far centuries, and show
The vanish'd past again, reviv'd, recall'd
With all the pageantry of olden time.
And now the full and rising harvest moon
Peeps from the dim and purple line, which grows
More deep along the sky ; and silently
She mounts with radiant glory her known path,

A queen of peace. Oh ! what intensity
Of feeling rises tow'rds her as she looks
So calm and peaceful from her distant throne !
How leaps the longing soul to that red west
Where ebb the waves of sunset ! joyously
The spirit through creation flies, and drinks
Deep from a thousand streams, but back returns
Restless and thirsting still ! There is a void,
A vacancy unfill'd ; a something yet
Is needed to complete full happiness.
A truer sympathy is wanting, such
As forms another self. The yearning heart
Beats with tumultuous thoughts, and willingly
Would melt itself in passion's strains, and find
Some kindred rest—some kind and gentle home
Where it might find repose. And now it seems
To tread a fairy spot, and feel new joy,
And drink from all the thousand sacred streams
Mingled in one ; for when I turn and look
And see thy pensive face, it fascinates

And penetrates unbidden ; and thine eyes
Deepen with light unspeakable, and hue
Lustrous, and soft, and full ; and concentrate
Within their wondrous orbs beauty intense,
Resistless, and enthralling—pleading not
With weak unmeaning words, but looks which win,
And melt with mighty sympathetic pow'r
Growing upon its captive. I know not
Why it should speak thus strangely to me. Why
It penetrates instinctively my soul,
And draws me with delicious pow'r, and breathes
A fresher life. Nay ! turn not—true ! the night
Is coming ; let me be thy guardian then
Till we o'ertake the rest. Our quicken'd step
Will warn away the chilling damp which steals
As grows the hour, and spares not young nor old,
But ever watches anxiously for prey."

Such was the spot, with sacred memories
Deepen'd by after time, which Amy chose

As one the most endear'd, and there she went
To vent her grief and joy in solitude.
Grief for her brother's and her sister's fate ;
Hard rumour with unwelcome voice had told
Their names among the dead—slain ruthlessly
By the false rebel murd'rer's bloody hand.
Joy that her Henry liv'd, and valiantly
Trod the steep path of fame. Her thankful heart
Beat fast with gratitude that he was spar'd,
When Death in wrathful mood cast forth his darts,
And let the shadow of his lifted arm
Fall on the manly countenance ; and smote
Unsparingly, and heap'd his victims round.
Oh ! what a pray'r was that unspoken, but
Intenser than in words, from the full heart
Went to the throne on high for safety ! what
A faith was that which saw Omnipotence
Stretching its everlasting arms abroad
To India for protection to the brave !
And what a lulling peace descending came

With the assurance, that above all war,
And death, and tumult, sits th' Eternal Mind,
Ruling for His great purposes of good
The human tempests of the world below !

IX.

The morning sun look'd gaily down on earth,
And rising from his couch, pour'd forth his beams
To penetrate dull autumn's fog, and clear
The veil from off the river's winding course,
Till they could glitter in the rippling stream,
Or glide upon the deep, calm pool, where morn,
Thron'd on the skies, beholds her radiant face.
Restless, exhausted, wakeful, Agatha
Saw the first signs of dawn, the light increase
Till peeping through the branching dismal trees
It dimm'd the midnight lamp, and told of day
Coming in usual course. With tardy step
To her it seem'd to move—so do we judge
Of time by what we feel : in happiness

It speeds too quickly by ; in sorrow's hours
It moves with slowest steps. Long, long the night
To her, for teeming mem'ries throng'd the brain,
And rose before her in their freshness near,
Then vanish'd far for ever. Hopes, whose birth
Gladden'd the heart, and made life's sunny course
Seem but a joyous holiday, came back ;
They stood a moment, smil'd, then from her grasp
Leapt far, and with a fiendish mockery
Echo'd a long farewell. The castle tow'rs,
Built in imagination's dreams, rose up
Higher and higher still ; more beautiful,
And strong, and firm they stood, and to the base
Look'd such as no convulsive shock might move ;
But as the flag-staff rose to crown the whole,
An earthquake heav'd and the foundations rent—
Down the proud building into ruin fell.

Then the fierce storm of grief swept rudely by,
And on the brain its dark and fearful tide

Dash'd as rous'd ocean dashes 'long the shore,
And smites the beetling rocks in mist and gloom.
The tidings came, the worst was realized ;
Her all seem'd lost, both son and daughter slain
The certainty struck home with deadly pow'r,
And life and death disputing then began.
Nor long th' unequal strife : already worn
And wasted by anxiety, while hope
And fear contended for the mastery,
Stunn'd by the blow, the frail and tender form
Of Agatha gave way—she fell and died,
Ere to his mid-day throne the sun had climb'd—
Died in the night of grief and dark despair.
Her all was here ! her hope on earth was set ;
That hope departed, and her sun went down
And left all gloom—no heav'nly ray to cheer,
Or light beyond the grave. Her home had been
On earth ; there was her love, and to its ways
And things her best affections clung—her heart
Was given to its service. And for what ?

But those who now were taken. She had hop'd
To see that son climb in the path of life
To great and glorious honours, and become
Renown'd : for this she plann'd and toil'd, nor
vain

Long time had seem'd her hope, for promises
Had come from those in pow'r; but death stepp'd in
And claim'd them. They belong'd to her no more,
The shadow of the monster stood between
And mock'd with cruel sport her grief, and said,
“They smile no more, no more reap earthly good.”
Her desolation came : fearful indeed
The truth flash'd on her ; earthly pleasures fade,
For earthly pleasures are but fleeting things.
Her children ta'en. Alas ! Resign them ? no !
She could not, they were her one great delight,
For them she liv'd ! but death most cruelly
Echo'd with cutting words—“ The young or old
I spare not, choosing where I will my prey
And keep it mine for ever.” Then the waves

Of grief leapt huge and heavy on the brain ;
And the dim gloom of disappointment grew
Darker and darker still ; and so she died,
In the black night of bitterness ! No ray
Of hope divine was there, and o'er her form,
Stiff'ning in its last sleep, the moralist
Might read these startling, but instructive words,
“ The sorrow of the world which worketh death.”

X.

The day expected, long expected, dawn'd
For the assault on Delhi. 'Gainst a force
O'erwhelming as to numbers, Britain held,
Week after week, her own without the walls
And kept the foe at bay. That foe, intent
On her destruction ere fresh succours came,
Often repell'd, to strife again return'd;
But all in vain—defeated backward fled
Within the city walls once more, and there
Prepar'd resistance 'gainst extremity.
And Britain's gallant band maintain'd its ground,
Stood firm, prepar'd and waiting patiently
Supplies which came but slowly; and when all
Expected aid had come, they number'd few

Compar'd with the large force of mutineers
Who held the city, and defiance breathed.

Long must they wait, till reinforcement came
From England's distant home ; or 'gainst great
odds

Of numbers and position, smite the foe
Shielded by Death, and, spite his hideous form,
With wondrous daring take the victory.

That wondrous daring was not wanting, there
It burn'd in many a heart, and Vengeance cried,
And Wrong and Outrage stood in dreadful garb ;
Beck'ning the avenger on ; and noble souls,
Inspired by the sight, with heated blood
And reaching forward to the crown of fame,
Stepp'd into danger's path for valiant deeds,
And bid decision rise, nor hesitate.
So dawn'd the day at length for that assault,
And Wilson gave command, for Barnard's sun

Had sunk and set in death, “ The innocent
Spare, and be merciful, where mercy calls.
But cruelty remember, and spare not
The butchers who commit atrocities—
Our children and our women slaughter’d cry,
No mercy to the Sepoy ! none ! he gave
None in the frightful hour of massacre.”

The batteries’ roar had thunder’d forth with might,
Their messengers had leapt continuously ;
Their work was done ; for breaches had been made
Near the Cashmere and Water bastions.
Two columns plac’d to enter there, or die,
Stood ready for such service ; at the word
From Koodsee Bagh emerging, with firm step
They steadily advanc’d towards the breach,
Spite of the show’r of shot which round them flew
With fatal pow’r, striking as frequently
As winter’s hail strikes the yet clinging leaves.
They reach’d the ditch ; a pause—but not for long,

The ladders ready, to the work they went,
And fiercely charging up the scarp, rush'd on
With shout defiant, speaking victory.

Meanwhile advancing to the Cashmere gate,
With ammunition ready, Salkeld's band
Went dauntless through a fire of musketry,
And coolly laid their powder bags ; success
Thus far had crown'd their efforts, but revenge
Seen'd skulking near to smite : brave Salkeld fell,
Twice shot ; Carmichael tried to fire the train
But paid his life a forfeit ; Burgess then
Undaunted took his place, appli'd the light—
A flash—a shock—confusion, and the gate
Was riv'n and in atoms. Onward rush'd
Their eager forces to the city strife ;
Then fierce the combat grew, and hand to hand
Compell'd at last to fight, the mutineer
To desperation driv'n turn'd at bay.
The bayonet's thrust was felt ; the quick report

Of many-mouth'd revolver, and the din
And struggle of antagonist and clash
Of rival arms were heard ; the thirsty sword
Flash'd in its passage as it rose and fell.
Vengeance, with beating heart and eager eyes,
Exultingly look'd on the scene, and drove
Melting Compassion far away, and steel'd
The harden'd soul still harder than before.
More stubborn grew the fight ; the English
troops
Had yard by yard to force their onward way—
No undisputed ground, tenaciously
The Sepoy held his own. From wall and tow'r
From house-top far above, on ev'ry side
From dome and building fell alike the storm
Which thinn'd th' advancing ranks so fatally ;
Yet no avail, it could not stem the tide
Which rous'd and angry through that death-storm
roll'd.
Still British arms prevail'd, for victory

And vengeance arm'd, together strode along—
Proud victory and bloody vengeance join'd.

But in the middle march of triumph came
A cloud across the way, a dismal cloud :
Brave Nicholson receiv'd his mortal wound—
He fell ! E'en when the crown he sought was
near—

His hand nigh touch'd it, and the nerves were
strain'd

To reach it—in his grasp it sped, a gloom
Spread o'er it till it faded from the sight.
He died, and earthly honour round his name
Stands like a halo round the orbèd moon
Upon a murky night ; her purer light
Among the denser atmosphere of earth
Creating that known circle near her throne.
So does the spirit from a better world,
With nobler aspirations and desires
Than spring from this, create instinctively

From grosser and the denser things of time
A living halo round its home and name
Tinted with endless glory. So it lives
And shines for ever in the night of death.
No lull succeeded for the tear to fall ;
The clash of arms each rising sigh suppress'd,
And rous'd the energies from sorrow's sway—
Keen grief was lost in action. Onward swept
The battle-tide despite the dying brave,
Or pity's cry, or pain ; for vengeance spoke,
“ No mercy to the Sepoy ! none ! he gave
None in the frightful hour of massacre ! ”

For seven days from street to street they fought,
For seven days true courage won its way,
And British daring grew in might, and seem'd
Invincible, and wonders did, and smote
The foe with such a slaughter, till he fled
And all the city own'd them conquerors.

So triumph came ! and in the Palace hall
Where is the elysium of the eastern world,
A paradise on earth, if such there be ;
The sacred spot—the inmost shrine of kings,
Where no intruder ever dar'd to tread,
But spirits of the great departed came,
Hov'ring in robes invisible, to see
The glory of their race continuing
Intact, and far above the common mould ;
By sacred mem'ries guarded, and enrich'd
With lavish gifts and honours, and enthron'd
In that most sacred of all sacred spots ;
There, in that home of kings, the British name
Enter'd of right. There rose the loyal shout
For her who reign'd on Britain's distant throne :
That shout so strong and true from English hearts
Rose with no sound uncertain ; rose and shook
The rich pavilion's sanctity, and swell'd
Through dome and hall, and to the city told
Th' avenger there, who came by wrongs arous'd

And smote the monsters of committed crimes.
And dimm'd in blood the sword of vengeance, told
How that avenger stood invincible,
Proud and supreme in conscious victory.

XI.

The strife had pass'd away, and victory
In Delhi was complete ; its tidings borne
To England had made glad a thousand hearts.
Proud of their nation's prowess, and the brave
And daring hearts who resolutely stood
Against o'erpow'ring numbers, till the few
At hand to succour came ; then nobly rush'd
To combat with the multitude which held
The doom'd, polluted city ; and in spite
Of wall and tow'r, of trench and obstacle,
With armèd troops defended, won their way,
And took the stronghold from th' insurgents' hand.

Proud of such men who bore their country's name,
The shout in Britain rose for victory.

“ ’Twas well and nobly done !” each heart replied
“ All honour to the brave !” But as that shout
Died in a distant echo, slowly came
A sound of grief, a dull and heavy sound ;
Grief for the dead—the fall’n in the strife,
The wealthy, noble, gifted, and the pride
Of families—the light and life of homes.
That mournful sound had spread, to Amy came
Already pale and haggard with deep grief.
A brother and a sister slain afar ;
Her mother’s fate beneath the blow, which fell
So heavily on all. She left alone
With one, who like herself bow’d to the storm,
And heard his children’s fate, and saw his wife
Cut off, yet recognised the hand of God,
And said, “ Thy will be done !” And in his face
She saw the soothing light of patient hope ;
And resignation beaming there, as beams
The rainbow on the thunder cloud, which dark
And threat’ning wraps the joyous earth in shade.

One earthly hope was hers—her Henry liv'd !
A hope which like a light in darkness shone,
Yet clouded often times with doubt and fear.
He trod in danger's pathway, and grim death
Had often touch'd him as he pass'd, and caus'd
A chilling shudder to run through the frame ;
And that one hope grew strong, and many a pray'r
Went up for safety to the throne of God—
“ Father, protect him by Thy mighty arm.”
That pray'r was heard, but wondrous are the ways
God uses in his purposes ; he speaks
In tones of love, which sound all bitterness ;
His works of mercy seem but cruelty
When wrongly heard and read ; when reason comes
With proud and carnal mind interpreting
Where it should bow submissively, and learn
Its Maker's will. Those whom God loves he leads
By dark and troublous paths, yet not in vain,
To purify and test their faith ; to try
Their constancy, their hope ; and mould them :

Those characters who shall receive His crowns.
That one bright hope of Amy's stronger grew,
And faith increas'd, and goodly tidings came ;
" Courageous, noble, foremost in the fight,"
All told his praise. Alas ! uncertain life !
In that assault he fell, and Delhi's name,
And victory brought woe ; deceitful hope
Went out and vanish'd in the shade of death.
Dread rumour spoke ; with reeling brain she heard
Not his victorious deeds, his valiantness :
She only heard the tidings " he was dead !"
Grief smote her beating heart, yet not a tear
Or aught beside the pallor on her cheeks
Bespoke her inward woe. Deep, deep, it struck !
And seiz'd upon her soul, and settled there,
And fed itself in speechless agony.
Like a dark cloud it came—came all at once !
She could not see her way nor ear'd to feel,
Nor thought on the returning light ; no star
Appear'd in that benighted solitude ;

Her object in life's journey ceas'd, there fell
Such utter desolation round her, such
A void was in her heart, in wretchedness
Reason and faith together prostrate lay.

So days and nights pass'd on ! long days, and
 nights,
And weeks ; and on her mighty grief she dwelt,
Letting it gnaw in secret. On the brain
It roll'd, as rolls with ceaseless ebb and flow
The tide along the shore ; no rest—the dash,
Or weary moan was there ; until her frame
Nigh sank beneath its pow'r. Her healthy face
Grew thin, the light forsook her eye, but all
Directed by her Father's hand was well.
He gave, He took away ; He tempted not
Beyond endurance, at her side He stood
With strength sufficient for her day, and faith
Rose from the trial purifi'd and full.

One spot to her more sacred than the rest
Of earth she lov'd to tread, and there to sit
And muse on the gone past, and disenthomb
Departed hopes and words more sacred made.
There had she learn'd a secret which became
The hope of after life ; there consciousness
First dawn'd that she was lov'd ; that to her bent
A noble nature in its worship, while
It moulded hers to it. There had she heard
Deep lessons from his lips, which back return'd
With living freshness in her day of grief ;
And musing there when the late autumn sun
With wintry glances lit the skies above,
And through the naked trees look'd glitt'ringly
With gilding light on the strewn wreck below.
His words came back with touching melody
Soft'ning her inward grief : " How fair the scene
Before us spread in beauty ; it must die.
'Tis earthly—what is earthly fades. Love not
With an inordinate affection earth

For disappointment lurks beneath its form.
Yon trees, so full of life, shall cast their dress
By winter's tempest scatter'd, and their leaves
Shall be the sport of whirlwinds ; toss'd about
In wild, fantastic frolic, they shall dance
Amid the fury of the sweeping storm.
Dream, if you will, while verdure clothes the earth
And flow'rs laugh in their beauty, and the sun
Is warm, and green boughs cast a tempting shade !
Dream and enjoy the present ! but there comes
The winter treading on its heels ; for this
Prepare ! forget not there is such a time."

So came his words again most soothingly,
And seem'd to lift her soul from the long grief
Which settled round her ; and above the gloom
She saw a bright and joyous spot, and one
Stood there, who beckon'd her to come, and said,
In tones full well remember'd and endear'd,
" Love not the earth too much, it disappoints !

Your home is here ! here tread with steady step,
Here fix your gaze, here let your hope be set !
Have faith in God. His dealings may appear
Mysterious and distressing, but have faith !
Remember His most gracious promise ; let
Your thoughts return with comfort to His word :
‘ All things together work for good, to such
As love—to those God by His purpose calls
To holy life, and knowledge in his ways.’
Distrust not then thy Father’s love, He draws
Thy wand’ring spirit to Himself, and weans
Away from tempting earth. E’en now He tells
It cannot satisfy thy hope, nor fill
The void existing in thy aching heart.
Here ! where no sigh is heard, no tear is seen,
No sorrow gnaws upon its victim ; where
No heart in desolation sits and broods ;
Nor disappointment comes, nor death steps in
To check the stream of love : here is true peace
Which with delicious sweetness fills the soul !”

Quickly decision came ! “ Thy will be done ! ”

And hers to it submissive bent ; then light

Broke through the gloom, she saw the Christian's
path

O'erhung with joys she never knew before,

And dull religion rise a lovely thing.

The weight fell from her heart ; behind, her grief

Lay in the darkness past ; before her shone

Light, life, new hope, and immortality.

Death lost his dreaded form, and changing stood

Before her as the gate of life, and faith

Applied the key ; it open'd, and she saw

The lov'd and lost from earth rejoicing there,

Safe in the presence of the King of kings.

The distance seem'd to lessen, and her heart

Was drawn towards them, it was but a step

Across the valley of the shade of death.

The resurrection morn broke vividly,

And the regretted and the lost came back

Wearing their robes eternal, and the crowns

Of victory ; and on each forehead stamp'd
The new name written by the living God,
Which none knew but themselves, and in their
 hands

The sceptres of the just. Redeem'd from death,
And risen from corruption, the vile dust,
Chang'd to a glorious body like the Lord's,
Stood in imperishable life ; the glow
Of conscious immortality was there,
And on the cheek health's everlasting bloom.

Earthly delusions fell ; her buoyant soul,
Inspir'd by a divine celestial pow'r,
Yearn'd tow'ards that better rest instinctively ;
Her heart leapt to reunion, and she felt
That sanctified, and bless'd by heav'nly love,
Deep sorrow was the stepping-stone to bliss.

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